

U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 10/791,787
Amendment filed March 26, 2007
Reply to OA dated October 25, 2006

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3, 5-8, 11-18, and 23 are currently pending. Claims 1, 3, 5-8, 13, and 23 are currently being considered, of which claims 1 and 23 have been amended herein. Claims 11, 12, and 14-18 have been withdrawn from consideration. Claims 2 and 19-22 have been canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer as to their subject matter.

A. Claims 1, 13, and 21 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by USP Pub. US2003/0007262 (Tsuboi).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection of claims 1, 13, and 21, for the reasons set forth below.

B. Claims 1, 3, 13, and 21 stand rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by USP 6,360,035 (Hurst).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection of claims 1, 3, 13, and 21, for the reasons set forth below.

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C. Claims 3, 6, and 20 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over **Hurst** in view of USP 6,882,455 (**Arima**).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection of claims 3, 6, and 20, for the reasons set forth below.

D. Claim 5 stands rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over **Hurst** in view of USP 6,831,765 (**Yasuda**).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection of claim 5, for the reasons set forth below.

E. Claims 6 and 22 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over **Hurst** in view of USP 5,739,941 (**Knipe**).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection of claims 6 and 22, for the reasons set forth below.

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F. Claims 7, 8, and 23 stand rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as obvious over **Hurst** in view of JP 2002214560 (**Tokuda**).

Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection of claims 7, 8, and 23, for the reasons set forth below.

G. The Examiner has objected to claim 19 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and has noted that claim 19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

The Examiner has indicated that claim 19 sets forth allowable subject matter. The Examiner has objected to claim 19 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, and has noted that claim 19 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Herein, features of claim 19 have been incorporated into base claim 1, as amended.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1, as amended, sets forth allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claims 3, 5-8, 13, and 23 should be withdrawn by virtue of their dependency.

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Applicants respectfully submit that the objection to claim 19 is moot and should be withdrawn, because claim 19 has been canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer as to its subject matter.

Applicants respectfully submit that the rejections of claims 20-22 are moot and should be withdrawn, because claims 20-22 have been canceled herein without prejudice or disclaimer as to their subject matter.

Claim 23 has been amended herein only to correct a minor error, and has not been amended herein in order to overcome any rejection.

In view of the above, Applicants respectfully submit that no serious burden will now be on the Examiner. Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider all currently pending claims, including claims which were withdrawn from consideration. More particularly, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner consider all currently pending claims 1, 3, 5-8, 11-18, and 23.

In view of the aforementioned amendments and accompanying remarks, all claims currently pending are believed to be in condition for examination.

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If, for any reason, it is felt that this application is not now in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to contact the Applicants' undersigned attorney at the telephone number indicated below to arrange for an interview to expedite the disposition of this case.

In the event that this paper is not timely filed, the Applicants respectfully petition for an appropriate extension of time. Please charge any fees for such an extension of time and any other fees which may be due now or in the future with respect to this application, to Deposit Account No. 01-2340.

Respectfully submitted,

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PATENT TRADEMARK OFFICE

Enclosure: Petition for Extension of Time (two months)